Emergency Services

Mission Communications Procedures

Highbird and Ops Normal
Mission Communications Procedures

Emergency Services Mission Communications Procedures

These communications procedures will help insure effective communications between the mission base and deploying resources during emergency services missions

Pre-Departure Radio Checks

Prior to departing the mission base, the resource (aircrew or ground team) should perform a radio check with base communications on all appropriate frequencies, demonstrating that their radio equipment works. These calls should be made after engine start, and before leaving the tie-down area.   If radio communications can't be made on these frequencies prior to departing the base, RETURN TO THE BASE for further instructions.

- ✍ CAP VHF-FM Simplex (148.150, Radio Channel 1)
- ✍ CAP VHF-FM Air-Ground Simplex (149.5375, Radio channel 4)
- ✍ CALCORD (156.075, radio channel 79, Stealth zone 7 channel 3)
- ✍ CAP VHF-FM Repeater (local repeater to be determined)
- ✍ Aircraft – base frequency _____
- ✍ Other - _____

- ✍ Other - _____

Operations Normal Check-Ins

All resources: All CAP resources will make ops-normal checks on the schedule directed by operations during their sortie briefing. Due to the number of resources that may need to be polled, the check-in transmissions must be kept short. The following general procedures will be used:

Format: The reporting aircraft resource will make or respond to ops normal calls with their callsign (CAPFLT xxx), location (grid, in route to grid, returning to base) and "ops normal" only, unless there is an emergency condition that needs to be reported.

Ground resources (ground or UDF teams) will make or respond to ops normal calls with their callsign (Team xx), location (10 miles north of Taft on highway 33), and "ops normal" only, unless there is an emergency condition that needs to be reported.

Highbird Check In and Operator Procedures

Highbird aircraft are launched when necessary to provide reliable communications between the mission base and deployed resources, or to act as an airborne relay when existing repeaters are unusable. The decision of when to launch a high bird aircraft is up to the IC.

Highbird Aircraft Equipment:

Highbird aircraft must be equipped with full-power (minimum 10 watt output) CAP VHF-FM radios, with external antenna, integrated with the aircraft audio control panel. Member owned aircraft without installed CAP VHF-FM radios are not suitable. The highbird aircraft commander does not need to be a fully qualified mission pilot, a suitable transport pilot can fly the mission. It is not necessary to launch highbird aircraft with observers and scanners, but must have a competent individual sitting in the observer seat (right front seat) acting as the highbird radio operator. If there is a possibility that the highbird will have to fly at altitudes requiring supplemental crew oxygen, the aircraft must be equipped with it.

Highbird Operations:

When a highbird aircraft is polling for ops normal checks, the base will notify the highbird of aircraft that should be checked using the assigned CAPFLT number; and highbird becomes responsible for maintaining accountability of the resources. The highbird radio operator will keep track of the resources on CAWG F 110A (attachment 1), indicating in the "CHOP" column when highbird assumes accountability of the resource. Prior to departure, fill in the top lines of the CAWG F 110A, including the primary and secondary check in frequencies and the repeater name and channel. This information is part of the general information briefing information, available to all.

The highbird radio operator will poll aircraft on a regular schedule. Note the local, 24-hour time the check-in starts in the columns labeled "time". Announce via a general call on the appropriate radio frequencies (CAP or Aircraft) that the check-in poll is starting, and then poll the aircraft in the order they are listed on the log. Check ins are normally conducted at 30 minute intervals, usually at 0 and 30 minutes past the hour. When the aircraft check in with their ops normal call (see above), place an X in the column indicating their check-in. If an aircraft misses the first call of their calls, make one additional call to them. If they don't respond, move on to the next aircraft. Use the following script:

"Attention all aircraft, this is highbird x: The (insert time) ops normal rollcall will begin now".

"CAPFLT xxx (first aircraft), over".

[Wait for response. If any aircraft misses their call, return to them at the end of the poll. Call again on the primary frequency, if they miss again attempt contact on the secondary frequency. If they fail to check in again, notify the IC immediately.]

When the called aircraft responds, the radio operator will answer with "CAPFLT xxx, roger", and move to the next aircraft on the list.

"CAPFLT xxx (second aircraft), over"

Etc throughout the list of aircraft.

[For an aircraft that misses their first call]

"CAPFLT xxx, over" [wait 10-15 seconds]

"CAPFLT xxx, over" [wait another 10-15 seconds], if not heard,
"CAPFLT xxx not heard"
"CAPFLT xxx (next aircraft)"

When the roll call is completed on the primary frequency, the radio operator should make one more attempt on to contact any aircraft that missed their first calls, If the aircraft still doesn't respond, switch to the alternate frequency and call them. If they still don't check in, and haven't previously notified the highbird or base that they will be out of touch, notify the IC immediately. (See failure to check in, below).

When an aircraft departs grid, note the time they left the grid and their ETA (not time enroute) at the base. When accountability for the aircraft returns to the base, note this time in the "at base" column.

Use functional callsigns. Member owned aircraft should be assigned temporary CAPFLT callsigns by Air Ops for the mission. Do NOT use formal radio net techniques and minimize use of callsigns, prowords, etc. KEEP IT SHORT.

The highbird radio operator must keep the check-in process short and specific. It should take well less than 15 seconds per aircraft to check in a resource. If any station needs to break into the roll call, they must be allowed to, and the radio operator needs to take appropriate action, including performing an airborne relay, while maintaining accountability of the aircraft.

CAWG ICS F 214 (Unit Log) or CAPF 110 (Radio Station Log) can be used for general note taking. A summary of any airborne relays made (from, to, time, summary) should be made.

When the highbird assignment is handed off (to another aircraft, or to the base), the highbird radio operator will relay all open (i.e. still accountable) aircraft to the new highbird radio operator. Care must be taken to get all the open aircraft so accountability can be maintained. When the highbird returns to base, give used CAWG F 110A's and CAWG ICS F 214 to Air Ops for inclusion with the sortie paperwork, unless other arrangements are made. Do not take the paperwork home with you.

Failure to check in:

Repeated failure to check in is a serious matter. Should an aircraft miss their first two calls on the primary frequency, the highbird radio operator will attempt calling them on the alternate frequency, if they still do not check in, notify the IC immediately.

If a resource expects to be out of radio contact during a roll call, they should notify the accountable radio operator (base or highbird) prior to missing a call. A specific, last-chance time that they MUST check in should be agreed to. If the resource misses this last-chance time, they must break off their current assignment and achieve radio contact

with the base or highbird – even if this requires returning to the base, or landing and making a phone call.

Ground Teams may also make ops normal calls through the highbird, the highbird radio operator will indicate the team number (not Yosemite callsign) in a separate ground team only CAWG F 110a.

When the rollcall is complete, the highbird radio operator will make a call to the base informing them that "the (time) rollcall is complete, xx aircraft checked in, ops normal". Rather than repeat the callsigns of all the aircraft (at this time), a simple count of all aircraft that have checked in will allow Air Ops to confirm that all aircraft have been polled. If there is any question of the aircraft that checked in, the highbird radio operator can review the CAPFLT numbers with the base.

Highbird Radio Operator Equipment Checklist

The highbird radio operator should have the following recommended personal equipment with them:

- ✍ Appropriate flight clothing, (flight suit, boots, gloves, jacket, glasses, etc.)
- ✍ Personal headset (optional), but the radio operator must have a suitable headset, either personally owned or part of the aircraft equipment.
- ✍ Highbird procedures checklist
- ✍ Repeater map, CAPFLT callsign list
- ✍ Clipboard (plastic, storage type recommended)
- ✍ Sick sack
- ✍ Water (minimize drinking in flight)
- ✍ Piddle pack
- ✍ Pencils, mechanical (several), with erasers
- ✍ Flashlight
- ✍ CAWG F 110A (20 sheets)
- ✍ CAWG ICS F 214 (Unit Log) (20 sheets)
- ✍ Notepad (lined paper)
- ✍ Wristwatch set to local time at the base
- ✍ Oxygen nasal cannula (if going to oxygen altitudes)

Attachment 1 – CAWG F 110A (sample, actual form larger)

OPS NORMAL LOG **CAWG Form 110a**	Mission Number:		Date:			Incident Base:		Page of pages	Highbird #
Check in Freq	Primary:		Secondary:		Repeater Name:			Rptr Ch:	
Team/Aircrew Number	Put an X in the box if Team/Crew checks in							ETA to Base	At Base
	Chop:	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:		
Report to IC all missed check-ins if not contacted within 10 minutes.									

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